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Orwin C. Talbott, Army lieutenant general

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Orwin C. Talbott, 92, an Army lieutenant general and combat veteran of two wars who played a role in the Army's decision to try Army Lt. William L. Calley Jr. for leading a platoon that systematically killed unarmed South Vietnamese civilians in 1968, died April 26 at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington. He had a heart attack.

In 1969, Gen. Talbott was the commanding officer of Fort Benning, Ga., when Calley was charged with the premeditated murder, in My Lai, of more than 100 South Vietnamese civilians, including women and children.

Gen. Talbott helped pick the court-martial panel. Calley was based at Fort Benning when news of the killing became an international incident.

Calley was convicted and sentenced to 20 years in prison for the murder of 22 civilians but, after public protests about the officer being made a scapegoat, President Richard M. Nixon reduced the sentence. Ultimately, Calley served three years under house arrest at Fort Benning.

Orwin Clark Talbott was a native of San Jose, Calif., and attended the University of California at Berkeley.

He joined the Army in 1941. During World War II, he was an infantry commander during the invasion of Normandy. His troopship, the Susan B. Anthony, sank after it struck mines.

He saw combat in Vietnam, where he was the commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division. He received the Silver Star for helping, at great personal risk, to coordinate attacks against intense enemy fire and then safely evacuate troops under his command in October 1968.

He twice received the Silver Star during World War II. His other decorations included three awards of the Distinguished Service Medal, three awards of the Bronze Star Medal and three awards of the Purple Heart.

His final active-duty assignment, in 1975, was as deputy commander of the training and doctrine command at Fort Monroe in Hampton, Va.

He lived in Annapolis before moving to the District in 1999.

He was a member of the Society of the Cincinnati of Maryland and the Society of the First Infantry Division. He was a past director of the Maryland Historical Trust.

Survivors include his wife of 68 years, Nell Coughran Talbott of Washington; two children, Marinel Mukherjee of Freehold, N.J., and Stephen Talbott of Bay Village, Ohio; a sister; and three grandchildren.

— **Lauren Wiseman**

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